



For Immediate Release

IDOC Sees Drop in Youth Recidivism Rate

Indianapolis, IN (March 5, 2013) – The Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) and Division of Youth Services (DYS) continue to make tremendous strides in reducing the youth recidivism rate. The IDOC announced today through a recidivism study that the overall rate of youth offenders returning to IDOC custody within three years of release has significantly declined for the second year in a row.

According to the study, of the youth offenders released in 2009 only 34% have returned to custody by 2012, a percentage reduction of more than 7% from 2011's recidivism rate of 36.7%. After peaking at 39.2% in 2010, the recidivism rate for youth offenders has decreased a percentage reduction of more than 13% in just two years. That means nearly 8 out of 10 (78.2%) of the youth released in 2009, did not return to a state juvenile or adult correctional facility during the three year tracking period.

In 2009, the Department created the Division of Youth Services to provide appropriate services and treatment for the youth in our care and ensure that they have successful re-entry upon their release. Since then, DYS has made major efforts to reduce the length of stay of juveniles in secure facilities and to assign youth to the least restrictive setting based on their individual needs and risks in accordance with national best practice approaches. DYS has also worked closely with Juvenile Courts to establish appropriate community based diversion programs aimed at reducing the commitments to secure facilities, ensuring that only those youth who pose true public safety risks are committed and assigned to an IDOC juvenile correctional facility. Through these efforts, the IDOC youth population has been dramatically reduced from almost 1,000 youth in 2008 to just 517 youth today.

"The Department is beginning to see the benefits of the reform efforts that began in 2008 and 2009 through the successes of the youth who were in our care and these reductions in recidivism. We owe this success to all of those working in this field, particularly the front line staff, who have embraced these reforms and changed the culture of DYS and the cultures of our juvenile correctional facilities," stated Executive Director of Youth Services Michael Dempsey.

In 2011, the IDOC and DYS began a partnership with the Indiana Supreme Court and the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute for the statewide expansion of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), a juvenile justice reform initiative by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. JDAI is based on the belief that it is in the best interest of youth and the community to provide community-based alternative programs which allow youth to remain in the community while still ensuring public safety. In 2006, Marion County was selected as Indiana's first JDAI local expansion site. Due to the successful system-reform efforts in Marion County, Indiana began to explore statewide expansion of the JDAI program. In 2009, four additional Indiana Counties became JDAI sites, Johnson, Lake, Porter, and Tippecanoe. Three additional sites were welcomed into Indiana's JDAI expansion in 2011 and 2012—Clark, Elkhart, and Howard

Counties. As the second state in the nation to implement JDAI on a statewide basis, Indiana continues to be a national leader in advancing the cause of an equitable and effective juvenile justice system.

For more information about Indiana's involvement in JDAI, visit <http://www.youthlawteam.org/indiana%20JDAI.html>

About IDOC's Recidivism Study

The Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) defines recidivism as a return to incarceration within three years of the offender's date of release from a state correctional facility. This study looks at youth offenders released in 2009 and follows the offender for three years from their release date to determine if the offender returned to incarceration in either a juvenile or adult facility.

The IDOC's Research and Planning Division collected, analyzed, and presented the recidivism data.

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